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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal spirit, You see our thoughts from a distance. You look not merely on our exteriors but also at our interiors. You know our desire to please You and to honor You with our lives. You know our remorse for neglected duties, missed opportunities, and selfish pursuits.

Lord, You are aware that we need strength for today and hope for tomorrow. Today, meet the needs of our lawmakers as they confront the challenges of our time. Give them faith to trust that Your sovereign providence will prevail. Remind them that they are never alone.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Margaret R. Guzman, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, Senate Republican colleagues and I visited our allies and partners in Europe. We both reassured them of America's commitment to strength and leadership but also urged them to invest and engage more in security and the transatlantic alliance.

Our allies are coming around to the realization that security assistance to Ukraine is not just helping one nation's citizens defend their sovereignty. It is also degrading Russia's ability to further threaten Europe or threaten America and sending a powerful deterrent signal to other potential aggressors.

From our own perspective, much of the money that is being described as American aid to Ukraine is actually being invested in our own defense industrial base here at home. We are procuring new versions of munitions and weapons for our own military to replace often decades-old versions that we have sent over to Ukraine.

And, after an ill-advised "holiday from history," European allies are now following America's lead. NATO members are making historic investments in defense that will keep paying dividends long after Ukraine defeats Putin's aggression.

The West is priming the pump of the industrial capacity that will ensure we

are prepared to meet the larger military challenges posed by systemic rivals like China.

The recent press reports that Beijing is considering providing weapons to Russia should not come as a surprise. China has plenty of reasons to fear a Russian defeat and plenty of reasons to hope Russia gets away with forcibly seizing another country's territory.

Yesterday, the Senate Armed Services Committee heard testimony from Keith Kellogg, a former adviser to President Trump and cochair of the Center for American Security at the America First Policy Institute.

Like the vast majority of Republican Senators, he complained that the Biden administration had been actually too slow in providing military assistance to Ukraine. He noted that the best way to end the conflict was to "enable Ukraine to defeat the Russian army in Ukraine."

And what about the claim that the West supporting Ukraine is somehow distracting us from the threats posed by the PRC?

Here is what Kellogg said:

Make no mistake: weakness against Russian aggression is weakness against the Communist-Chinese threat . . . Russian victory in Ukraine today almost certainly means war for Taiwan tomorrow.

Likewise, in Japan, senior officials are spelling out the clear link between the response to Putin and the prospects of deterring President Xi. They have taken historic steps to invest more in their own defense, and during our trip last week, Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan plans to direct \$5.5 billion in assistance toward Ukraine.

Other reports indicate that citizens of Taiwan are volunteering to fight alongside Ukrainians against Russia.

Let me say that again. There are reports that indicate citizens of Taiwan are volunteering to fight alongside Ukrainians against Russia.

The very people most threatened by the ambitions of the PRC tomorrow

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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